

APPENDIX D: EJSG Work Plan Template

A. Project Title and Project Purpose Statement (1/2 page)

Wichita KS Industrial Corridor Emissions Transparency and Accountability Project

Sunflower Community Action members have been engaged for 24 years in Wichita's low income neighborhoods of color along the city's industrial corridor that includes the major railroad right of way and north-south freeway. We intend to address pollution in zip code area 67214 by working with EPA Region 7, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, the Wichita-Sedgwick County public health officials and the City of Wichita. We seek more comprehensive monitoring and reporting systems along the corridor that will track air pollution, water pollution, solid waste disposal, and toxic substances that affect the health of workers and residents in core Wichita neighborhoods.

Sunflower members will do research to determine the level of oversight of industrial corridor industries and what releases of pollution past inspections have found. Then Sunflower will meet with regulatory agencies and business leaders to ask how industrial reports and inspections by agencies can be improved and make the results easier for the 382,368 Wichita residents to obtain and understand. Sunflower will help overcome the disconnect between monitoring agencies and the public, raising consciousness about public health challenges and the benefits of a cleaner, healthier environment, especially for Wichita's low income core neighborhoods.

Project outcomes will also include ten new organized and trained low income community leaders able to teach others and advocate for a healthier environment, and reduced mortality rates for cancer, kidney disease, asthma and other chronic lower respiratory diseases, especially for nonwhite Wichita residents.

Related environmental statutes are: the Clean Air Act, Section 103(b)(3); Toxic Substances Control Act, Section 10(a); Clean Water Act, Section 104(b)(3); and the Solid Waste Disposal Act, Section 8001(a).

B. Environmental and Public Health Information about the Affected Community

There has been progress in cleaning up petroleum products residue from Wichita's past in and along the industrial corridor, with the City of Wichita taking the lead to initiate work on three major projects: Gilbert/Mosley, Johns' Sludge Pond, and as of July 2014 the ongoing North Industrial Corridor remediation which includes the 29th and Mead and 13th and Washington sites. This remediation of 20th-century pollution is a sign of environmental progress in Wichita, but the

self-reporting and monitoring process for current business activity in the corridor needs closer examination and improvement.

One reason that 67214 lags behind most of the rest of Wichita is that it is split by I-135, and the main rail line that links the Gulf Coast and Mid-West. Because of that rail and highway access, it has been ideally situated for large corporations which need to ship large quantities of product across the country and around the world. Besides milling companies, 67214 is host to chemical firms, makers of dog and cat food, manufacturing, and other businesses that for reasons of zoning and rail/highway access are located in the industrial corridor.

The 16,542 people who share a 67214 address with Sunflower Community Action's office have poorer than average health. It is likely that we are impacted by a more toxic environment than is found in more affluent areas on the edges of the city and beyond. An examination of the corridor area on the EPA environmental justice map online shows that some businesses have not reported in the last five or ten years, and that the reports of others show the release of significant amounts of chemicals used in their operations. Sunflower members can smell some of what is being released and want to learn more about the air they breathe and toxins that may be present in the area's water and soil.

Half of 67214 residents are black, one-fourth are brown, and one-fifth are white. The median household income is \$26,726.

Health information by zip code is not easily available, but Wichita/Sedgwick County Health Department website shows higher mortality rates for cancer, chronic lower respiratory disease, and kidney disease for Sedgwick County than the rates of Kansas in general and national averages. Adjusted for age, nonwhite Sedgwick County residents had a 2009 mortality rate 45% higher than those who were white. County health department statistics show that approximately 10% of all Sedgwick County residents were diagnosed with asthma in 2009.

As is the case in many medium-sized and large cities, Wichita's low income people, including a high percentage of its people of color, live near the city's industrial area where housing is less expensive. These residents, because of their proximity to the sources of industrial emissions and diesel-burning trains and trucks, are most vulnerable to the toxins emitted in the industrial area.

Sunflower's proposed project will benefit 67214 by providing greater knowledge of pollution-related health risks, 20 organized, trained low income community leaders able to teach others and advocate for a healthier environment. In the long term, it will also reduce mortality rates for cancer, kidney disease, and asthma/other chronic lower respiratory diseases especially for nonwhite Sedgwick County resident who are disproportionately represented in and near the industrial corridor.

C. Sunflower's Historical Connection to the Affected Community

Sunflower Community Action has been informing and organizing low income people of color in Wichita's core neighborhoods since it was incorporated in 1991. It began with block clubs to address blight issues and lack of city services to low-income neighborhoods.

In 2000 Sunflower organizers found evidence of lead poisoning and asthma problems in our neighborhoods and was awarded a \$15,000 EPA grant for a project October 2000 to September 2001. Sunflower built relationships with the county health department and public school partners, knocked on doors, and held public meetings including testimony from families affected by lead poisoning. 132 children identified as at-risk by Sunflower were tested at their grade school by health department staff. A second grant was awarded for more work October 2001 to September 2002. During that grant year SCA successfully educated 1,850 people at three large public meetings and by a door knocking campaign to teach the dangers of exposure to lead and where to get medical testing and treatment. Sunflower initiated testing of 46 five year olds and provided forums to educate 35 parents at two public elementary schools.

In 2002-2003, Sunflower was again supported by an EJ \$15,000 grant, this one to expand Sunflower's work in fighting the illegal dumping of trash and toxic substances in Wichita's vacant lots, which had become a big problem due to the closing of Wichita's sanitary landfill. Sunflower worked with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Sedgwick County officials, and Wichita's Central Inspection Department to hold owners accountable for health and safety violations present on their properties. Twenty new leaders affected by illegal dumps were trained and organized to get them cleaned up. A new North Wichita Chapter of Sunflower chose dumping as its major issue, and invited property owners, business owners, and the Superintendent of Central Inspection to public meetings to address the problem. As a result six dumps were cleaned up, public officials were encouraged in their work, and new neighborhood leaders were empowered.

This work on blight bore more fruit in 2006 when Sunflower won a major environmental victory: the demolition and cleanup of a 20-year-old urban dump site, a duplex filled basement to attic with junk and the adjacent yard piled roof high with hazardous materials on two sides of the building. Sunflower organized neighbors who waged a six month campaign that finally persuaded the health department and city officials to take action. Momentum from that victory made it possible for Sunflower to win a more demanding city code that required slumlords to maintain their properties or face serious consequences. SCA created a Dirty Thirty list to monitor cleanup of the 250 worst properties in our core neighborhoods in cooperation with the Central Inspection Department.

In 2013-14 SCA, supported by an EPA EJ award, educated the public about conservation which lessens the need for coal-fired electric generation plants, trained leaders, and improved 100 homes with compact fluorescent light bulbs, lowering the hot water temperature, and sealing up cracks where air infiltration was making it difficult to keep their house warm/cool.

Sunflower is a grassroots organization that identifies potential leaders, teaches them to work together and speak up for themselves on issues they identify, and win victories that matter. The 870 dues-paying members define SCA's issues during planning, campaign, and board meetings. They provide the energy needed to bring changes in public policy and elect the Sunflower Board of Directors annually. SCA has had an ongoing relationship with Wichita's low-income neighborhoods for 23 years, and will continue to strengthen those relationships.

D. Project Description

Some industrial corridor businesses in 67214 have not been making required reports to regulatory agencies, and inspections by regulators of some businesses are infrequent. The EPA, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Wichita and Sedgwick County public health officials are not always clear about their respective roles in monitoring businesses in the area between Hillside on the east, 29th Street on the north, Broadway on the west, and Douglas on the south. These are roughly the boundaries of 67214 where many of the city's low-income people live. Sunflower's proposed project will employ **four kinds of activities** to achieve its goals.

Research

Sunflower staff and neighborhood leaders will do research using tools created by the EPA such as Environmental Justice View online and other available sources of information to determine what core Wichita businesses are failing to report to regulators or are not being inspected and called to account. This research will give Sunflower leaders a better idea of where environmental information gaps may be hiding public health hazards.

Public Education

Sunflower will hold 10 public meetings where a total of 500 people will be educated about the environmental quality of air and water in 67214 and what can be done to improve it. Six news stories in print, on television news and on the radio, plus two social media campaigns will educate 500,000 readers and listeners. Sunflower will provide the people of 67214 and the entire city with information about public health problems and suggest ways to work together toward environmental goals shared by nearly everyone.

Leadership Training

Sunflower will recruit 20 neighborhood leaders who will be organized and trained to ask businesses not create public health hazards and to encourage environmental agencies to be diligent in identifying polluters and holding them accountable.

Compliance Relationships

If funded by the EPA, Sunflower Community Action intends to bring leaders of 10 businesses and representatives of the EPA, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Sedgwick County, and City of Wichita to the table with neighborhood leaders to see the results of Sunflower's research and make the Wichita industrial corridor and adjacent neighborhoods a better place to live and work.

Working Relationships

The purpose of all these activities is to bring community stakeholders together to understand better the environmental factors that may be contributing to a poor quality of life and health, and discuss action plans to improve air and water quality. Neighborhood organizations, industrial corridor businesses, and regulatory agencies all have a vested interest in working together on environmental quality, and bring concerns and expertise to the table. It will be Sunflower's job to act as researcher, organizer of the public and community organizations, and catalyst for a new look at corridor environmental quality. Businesses will bring knowledge of their own operations and need to comply with federal, state, and local statutes. Regulators have an interest in being as efficient as possible through coordination with one another and the businesses they oversee.

E. Organizational Capacity and Programmatic Capability

Sunflower Community Action has demonstrated its capacity and capability in its relationship with the EPA and dozens of foundations during its 25 year history. Its budget for 2015 is \$513,535 supporting 11 FTE employees. Sunflower has a working relationship with the EPA Region 7 staff, the KDHE, Sedgwick County, and City of Wichita.

Sunflower's Director of Operations oversees use of QuickBooks accounting software and keeps accurate records of Sunflower's financial management. Administrative management has been successful for past EPA grants and will be equally successful in the future because of Sunflower's administrative infrastructure which is accountable to the Executive Director and the Sunflower Board.

Sunflower has clear accounting and reporting procedures for money it receives and spends. The Board Treasurer, Executive Director, Development Director, and Operations Director, backed by an annual professional audit, make sure Sunflower's financial stewardship is well documented. Sunflower has a recently revised 14-page Accounting Policies and Procedures manual to guide the organization's use of money entrusted to it. After consulting with the Development Director, the Board Treasurer makes financial reports at the Board of Directors' quarterly meetings. The Development Director is responsible for completing and timely filing of Sunflower's Form 990 and working with Larson & Co., SCA's auditor.

Sunflower has just completed an EPA EJ grant agreement number 97742601, awarded 8/29/2013, Reuben Eckels Project Officer, and has begun an \$80,000 OSHA Susan Harwood Training Grant number SH-26296-14-60-F-20, with Guadalupe Magdaleno as Project Officer.

Qualifications of the Project Manager, Reuben Eckels

EMPLOYMENT

March 2013 to date Sunflower Community Action, Wichita, KS

Director of Special Projects/Assistant Director

- Supervises staff organizers
- Advises the Sunflower Executive Director
- Builds community partnerships
- Oversees Environmental Justice projects

██████████ New Day Christian Church Wichita, KS

CEO/Pastor/Founder

- Developed and promoted church growth
- Preached, taught, raised money, and hired staff

██████████ USD259 Wichita Public Schools Wichita, KS

Parent Community Resource Specialist

Promoted parental and community involvement in USD259

Developed tools to equip families in enhancing childrens' academic careers

Created better communication among between parents, students, teachers and staff

██████████ Wichita State University Wichita, KS

Interim Director Office Of Multicultural Affairs

- Promoted of tolerance and diversity through programs and events
- Taught diversity to entire campus of Wichita State University
- Recruited, retained and supported traditionally underserved students
- Taught leadership skills
- Created and managed a \$400,000 budget

██████████ Wichita State University Wichita, KS

Middle School Coordinator Educational Talent Search

- Recruited low-income and potential 1st generation college students
- Provided testing and financial aid information, taught study skills, and offered tutoring services to 1,500 middle school students

- Instituted and managed a summer enrichment program

EDUCATION

■	Wichita State University	Wichita, KS
	B.A., General Studies	
■	Payne Theological Seminary	Wilberforce, OH
	Masters of Divinity New Testament Studies	

Reuben Eckels has the experience, maturity, and skills to communicate with public officials, business leaders, faith communities, and other community groups across racial and income lines. He has been an EJ Grant Project Officer, is heading up a low power radio project, KSUN 95.9, is well educated, has been a pastor and community activist in the area of human rights and civic engagement for 15 years, and is well respected.

F. Past Performance in Reporting on Outputs and Outcomes

Sunflower Community Action has reported outputs and outcomes in a timely fashion to fulfill the requirements of four EPA EJ projects and other grant awards, including those awarded by the Sierra Club, Unitarian Universalist Veatch Fund, and the Ford Foundation.

G. Quality Assurance Project Plan

After reviewing Appendix I, it appears that none of the ten statements there will apply to Sunflower's grant-funded activities.